

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02

OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 ACDA-05 INT-05

FEA-01 ERDA-05 OES-03 /109 W  
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R 171401Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0463

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, NG

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTS' SPEECH TO THE NATION

SUMMARY: ON OCCASION FIRST ANNIVERSARY MILITARY SEIZURE OF POWER, PRESIDENT KOUNTCHE'S MESSAGE TO NATION CONCENTRATED ON FUTURE PLANS OF SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL (SMC) AND HIGHLIGHTED THE FOLLOWING: A RE-EXAMINATION OF COUNTRY'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC BALANCE WHICH MAY INCLUDE LAND REFORM; ROLE OF SAMARIAS (TRADITIONAL YOUTH GROUPS) IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT; STATUS OF FOREIGN INVESTMENT; AND INCREASED REVENUES FROM URANIUM EXPLOITATION.

1. IN SOBER, MODERATE MESSAGE TO NATION ON APRIL 15 MARKING FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF MILITARY COUP D'ETAT WHICH BROUGHT KOUNTCHE AND SMC TO POWER, PRESIDENT CONCENTRATED  
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ON POLICY OBJECTIVES FOR COMING YEAR RATHER THAN GIVING

EXPECTED SELF-CONGRATULATORY REITERATION OF FIRST YEAR ACCOMPLISHMENTS (WHICH ARE MANY) OF SMC. PRESIDENT GAVE FIRST PRIORITY TO SEEKING WAYS TO END INTERMINABLE PETTY LAND DISPUTES WHICH DISRUPT VILLAGE LIFE AND HAMPER PRODUCTION EFFORTS. HE CALLED FOR A LONG-OVERDUE AGRARIAN REFORM AND DECREED THAT HENCEFORTH FIELDS CURRENTLY UNDER CULTIVATION WOULD REMAIN PERMANENTLY AT THE DISPOSITION OF THOSE NOW CULTIVATING THEM. HE STOPPED SHORT OF EXPROPRIATING THE LAND FROM ITS TRADITIONAL OWNERS BUT LEGITIMIZED IN CIVIL LAW AND MADE PERMANENT THE PEASANTS' TRADITIONAL RIGHT TO THE USE OF THE LAND. WITH THE SECURITY OF GUARANTEED LAND TENURE, THE PRESIDENT HOPED PEASANTS COULD MORE EASILY BE GROUPED INTO COOPERATIVES.

2. THE PRESIDENT SAID HE HAD BEEN DISAPPOINTED IN THE ROLE SAMARIAS HAD BEEN PLAYING IN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

EFFORTS. WHILE SOME SAMARIAS HAD SHOWN INITIATIVE IN UNDERTAKING SMALL SCALE PROJECTS, MOST HAD BEEN CONTENT WITH THEIR CULTURAL ACTIVITIES. SAMARIAS IN FUTURE SHOULD CONCENTRATE ON COMMUNITY WORK PROJECTS/TRAVAUX COMMUNAUTAIRES) AS HAVE BEEN BEGUN IN AGADEZ DEPARTMENT. TO THIS END THE SECRETARIAT FOR YOUTH WAS INSTRUCTED TO SEND ROVING ORGANIZERS TO ALL SAMARIES.

3. PRESIDENT NOTED RECENT RESTRICTIONS ON FOREIGNERS IN CERTAIN SMALL-SCALE SELF-EMPLOYED ACTIVITIES WOULD BE BROADENED TO INCLUDE STRICTER REGULATION OF TRADE IN LIVESTOCK AND HIDES AND GRAINS. NEVERTHELESS PRESIDENT EMPHASIZED THESE RESTRICTIONS ON "PETIT COMMERCE" DO NOT MEAN SMC WISHES TO DISCOURAGE FOREIGN INVESTMENT. OTHER LEGISLATION WILL BE PROPOSED TO FURTHER PROMOTE PARTICIPATION OF NERIENS IN NATION'S COMMERCE PARTICULARLY IN IMPORT-EXPORT TRADE AND HOTELS.

4. IN DISCUSSING MINERALS, PRESIDENT NOTED THAT INCREASED PARTICIPATION OF GON IN SOMAIR (FROM 16.75 PCT TO 33 PCT) AND DOUBLING OF URANIUM PRICE HAVE MEANT REVENUE INCREASED FOR GON OF FROM CFA ONE BILLION TO CFA FOUR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BILLION. IN FUTURE, NEGOTIATIONS ON URANIUM WILL BE CONDUCTED BY NEW NATIONAL OFFICE FOR URANIUM RESEARCH EXPLORATION AND MARKETING (URANIGER). THE PRESIDENT ANNOUNCED THAT A SIMILAR AGENCY WILL BE CREATED TO EXPLOIT PHOSPHATE DEPOSITS. PRESIDENT CANDIDLY REPORTED POOR RESULTS OF FIRST OIL WELLS BUT HELD OUT HOPES THAT "COURAGEOUS" OIL COMPANIES WOULD FIND OIL.

5. DOUNTCHE STRONGLY CRITICIZED SONARA FOR REDUCING PRICES PAID TO GROUNDNUT FARMERS PRIOR TO COUP ( PRODUCER PRICES HAVE SINCE BEEN DOUBLED). HE STATED SONARA WHICH WOULD SOON BE TAKEN OVER ENTIRELY BY STATE WOULD BEGIN PURCHASING DIRECTLY FROM FARMER COOPERATIVES THUS ELIMINATING MANY TRADITIONAL MIDDLEMEN PRONE TO SPECULATION.

6. IN CONTRAST SPECIFIC PROPOSALS FOR DOMESTIC POLICY, PART OF PRESIDENT'S PEECH DEVOTED TO FOREIGN AFFAIRS ONLY A BLAND RESTATEMENT OF CHANGES OVER PAST YEAR. PRESIDENT STRESSED "LOGIC" AND "REALITY" OF GON POLICY OF OPENING RELATIONS WITH PRC, RVN, NORTH KOREA AND GDR BUT GAVE NO INDICATION ANY FUTURE CHANGES.

COMMENT: PRESIDENT PRESENTED GENERALLY POSITIVE OUTLOOK REPRESENTATIVE OF PRAGMATIC APPROACH CHARACTERISTIC OF THIS GOVERNMENT. MUTED CRITICISMS OF INEFFICIENT BUREAUCRACY, EXPATRIATE TECHNICAL ADVISORS, AND RPOFIT-REPATRIATING TRADERS INDICATE A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF UNDERLYING DISSATISFACTION WHICH COULD LEAD TO MORE SUBSTANTIAL REFORMS IN THE FUTURE.HECK

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**To:** STATE  
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